

## Happy Valentine's Day! Or Is It? Joy Martin

What is Valentine's Day all about? Loving cards with roses and lace and hugs and kisses made by the sticky fingers of 5 year old grandchildren? A bouquet of red roses from your sweetheart? A box of rich chocolate candy, especially the kinds with caramel and nuts and gooey things? Going out for special dinner with prime rib steaks or lobster and delicious confections of mousse and whipped cream for dessert?

Perhaps today you don't anticipate having any of these things. Maybe your sweetheart took off for Heaven and left you behind. Maybe you have never even had a sweetheart! Or your grandchildren either have grown up or live so far away that they don't even think about you. Dinner may be a TV dinner eaten alone and dessert is an ice cream bar!

But are those things really the essence of Valentine's Day? Is it not rather a time to remember first that we are deeply loved by God! In the 2011 film, *The Help*, a maid often encouraged her employer's daughter with the words, "**You is kind, you is smart, you is important!**" Those are empowering words, especially when we realize that is how God really looks at us. He made us, knows all of our weaknesses and failures, knows our deepest longing for love and a sense of value! Psalm 103 and Psalm 139 show clearly how God feels about us, and how precious we are in His eyes.

If we truly accept His gift of salvation, then we have been given the greatest gift of love possible--unconditional, everlasting, deep love. What could be a better way to celebrate Valentine's Day than to enjoy His love, whether we are married or single, have any children or grandchildren, are alone, poor, friendless, tired.

God's Valentine Card to us says, "**I have loved you with everlasting love**" (Jer. 33:31)

Here are a couple of ideas to make this month special. **First**, do a search in your Bible concordance this month **and make a list of all the times God's great love** for us is described. Then memorize some of the verses and **meditate on them, one passage for each day**. At the end of this article I'm offer you a passage that would be good to memorize.

**Second, determine that you will express God's love to someone every day!** Don't bemoan what you don't have.

1. Give His love in practical ways--bake chocolate chip cookies or brownies for someone who is alone.
2. Invite several people over for dinner--it can be as simple as hot dogs or a baked potatoe bar with all the toppings.
3. Invite some girls over for tea at your place and serve simple treats such as cinnamon toast and vanilla wafers with fruit tea in pretty cups.

4. Take a widow out for brunch or take hot soup and cheese and crackers to a shut in!
5. Send unexpected Valentine cards to lonely people.
6. Give compliments to waitresses (don't forget to tip generously!) and cashiers along with big smile and thank you. Make eye contact and sincerely ask, "How are you today?" and then listen and respond appropriately.
7. Give hugs generously to anybody who needs one!
8. Send notes of appreciation to others who have encouraged you--a teacher, a pastor, your family members, a neighbor, a friend, an author or speaker.
9. Sing a love song to God, or "Jesus loves me" to a child!

Here is a paraphrase of one of my favorite passages of Scriptures on God's love. How about meditating on this scripture today and sharing it with someone else.

*I am convinced that **nothing** can ever  
Separate us from **His love**.  
Death can't, and life can't.  
The angels can't, and the demons can't.  
Our fears for today, our worries about tomorrow,  
And even the powers of hell  
Can't keep **God's love** away.  
Whether we are high above the sky  
or in the deepest ocean,  
Nothing in all creation  
Will ever be able to separate us  
From **the love of God** that is revealed  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.  
(See Romans 8:38,39)*

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